



Why Should Barriers Be Tested Regularly?

Security barriers come in a variety of types: wedge barriers, beam barriers, pop-up bollards, drop arms, and crash gates. Some barriers may be used daily for traffic control. Others, such as final denial barriers, may sit idle for weeks or months until tested or activated in an emergency. Regardless of the type or use, barriers should be tested on a regular basis. The old adage "Use it or lose it" applies to security barriers.

Three important reasons to test:

- To ensure the barrier operates properly as designed and intended in its application. This is especially important for barriers used only for emergencies.
- To check barrier safety devices are functioning properly.
- To expose issues with the barrier's sequence of operation to prevent potential damage to vehicles, personnel, or to barrier itself.

Simple regular tests should be performed to keep barriers up and running. As electromechanical devices barriers need to operate regularly, gears need to turn, fluids need to flow, and switches need to be activated.

In determining a barrier testing schedule and the test extent, the following factors should be considered:

- Is the barrier used daily or is it on standby for an emergency deployment?
- What are the safety features on the barrier that would need to be tested, i.e. safety loops, IR beams, contact sensors, lights, traffic arms, etc?
- Can the barrier be tested during off hours or during a gate closure?
- What security personnel will need to be available to support testing?
- Is the barrier receiving any regular maintenance or cleaning?
- If the answer is no, then more frequent testing is recommended.
- What does the barrier manufacturer recommend about regular testing or maintenance cycles?



In summary, every barrier should be tested regularly to increase the reliability and safety of the system. Determining the frequency and extent of testing should be based on the factors above. As a general guideline, a barrier should be tested once a week if the barrier is in standby or emergency only mode. If the barrier is used daily, complete testing should occur about once every four weeks.

Find out more in the Basic Barrier Maintenance Guide.

